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AUTHOR Yau, Maria; And Others
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ABSTRACT

This study surveyed 847 fourth- through eighth-graders and 134 teachers in 10 Toronto elementary schools to determine their attitudes toward school climate and conflict resolution. It found that most questionnaire items regarding self perception, teacher-student relationships, students' general behaviors, the schools' conflict resolution programs, and the importance of teaching students conflict resolution skills were responded to favorably by students and teachers. The survey also found that teachers and students differed significantly in their perception of social conflict behavior among students. While most teachers did not find such behaviors as fighting, being mean, picking on younger students, rejection, and name calling prevalent among their students, the majority of students indicated that these behaviors were quite common among their peers. Boys were more likely than girls to indicate frequent occurrences of such behaviors. The survey also found that students who had been trained as "peacemakers" in school mediator programs were overwhelmingly supportive of the program. Three appendices provide copies of the student and teacher questionnaire, as well as an information sheet for mediator program facilitators. (MDM)

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School Climate & Conflict Resolution: A Survey of the Toronto Board of Education's Elementary Schools (1994)

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School Climate & Conflict Resolution: A Survey of the Toronto Board of Education's Elementary Schools (1994)

March 1995

Maria Yau
Judith Arbus
Suzanne Ziegler
&
Avi Soudack

Executive Summary

The first School Climate and Conflict Resolution Survey for Toronto's elementary schools was conducted in Winter 1994. Ten schools across the city participated, with 847 Grade 4-8 students and 134 teachers* returning their respective questionnaires. Below are some key findings and issues emerged from the survey.

Most questionnaire items regarding one's self perception, teacher-student relationships, students' general behaviours, the schools' conflict resolution programs, and the importance of teaching students conflict resolution skills were responded favourably by students, and, more particularly so, by the teachers.

There were, however, a number of areas in which notable differences in opinions were observed between the students and their teachers, between boys and girls, and between students who had been trained as "peacemakers" and other students.

- Teachers and students differed significantly in their perceptions of social conflict behaviour among kids at the school. Most teachers did not find such behaviours as fighting instead of making peace, being mean to one another, picking on younger ones, rejecting other kids, or name calling prevalent among their students. But the majority of students indicated that these behaviours were quite common among their peers.
- It was also found that boys were more likely than girls to indicate frequent occurrences of the abovementioned behaviours in school. On the other hand, girls were more likely than boys to find themselves good at solving arguments without fighting.
- With regard to the school peer mediator program**, students who had been trained as "peacemakers" were overwhelmingly supportive of the program, and reported to have learned from it conflict resolution skills for themselves and for helping others. However, such favourable support and benefits did not seem to have yet transpired, at least not to the same extent, to other students.

The gaps highlighted above are flags that Conflict Resolution Advisors and associated school facilitators should bear in mind when implementing their current plans, or when planning for their future actions.

As a result of the survey, several research issues also arise. For instance, there is a need for a further understanding of the perceptual differences between teachers and students over the issue of social conflict behaviours among students. A closer examination may also be necessary to see *how* and *why* certain classroom practises and activities - such as teaching or fostering the general principals of tolerance and respect - were more

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* This represented half (51%) of the total teaching staff in the ten participant schools.

** This refers to the seven of the 10 participant schools which had established their schoolyard peer mediator programs at the time of the survey.

commonly practised in class than specific in-class conflict resolution activities such as Learning Circle, role-playing, or writing about conflicts, which were reported to have rarely occurred within the classroom. Finally, a replication of this survey with the same and additional schools will allow a long-term and broader look at the progress and development of individual schools' conflict resolution initiatives, as well as their impact on students' social attitude and conflict resolution skills.

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BACKGROUND

In February 1994, a School Climate and Conflict Resolution survey was conducted for the first time in Toronto's elementary schools, with the assistance of Student Support Services and Research Services of the Toronto Board of Education (TBE). The objective of the survey was two-fold:

- to take a snapshot of the status of individual schools in relation to the Board's Conflict Resolution initiative; and
- to establish some baseline for evaluating the progress of the initiative in the future.

The survey mainly consisted of two questionnaires - one for Grade 4-8 students (Appendix A) and the other for teachers (Appendix B). Both surveys contained comparable items on school climate, conflict resolution, and respondents' perceptions of and involvement in their schools' conflict resolution initiatives. Since each school was expected to develop its own conflict resolution plan according to the needs of its students, program facilitators or school administrators of each participant school were asked to describe their school's conflict resolution program on an information sheet provided (Appendix C).

RESPONDENTS

Altogether 847 students and 134 teachers from 10 elementary schools across the city took part in the survey. (See Table 1.)

Table 1: Conflict resolution survey respondents in Toronto public schools (1994)

Family of schools	No. of schools	No. of students	No. of teachers
East	4	424	50
West	3	184	44
North	3	239	40
TOTAL	10	847	134

All 10 schools had their conflict resolution programs in one form or another[1]. According to the program facilitators or school administrators who completed the information sheet, seven of the participant schools had their conflict resolution programs in place for at least two years at the time of the survey;[2] these seven schools had also established schoolyard peer mediator programs.

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[1]One school defined its program as an anti-bullying project.

[2]In fact, two of the schools reported to have the program for three or more years.

Of the 847 student who participated in the survey (54% female), nearly a third (31%) had been trained as student "peacemakers", "problem-solvers" or "conflict managers"[3] for their schools' peer mediator programs. Among the 134 teacher respondents (80% female), three quarters had taken conflict resolution training, and 20% had direct involvement in their schools' peer mediator programs by either taking part in training student peer mediators and/or planning or running peer mediators meetings. According to the Board's Conflict Resolution Advisors, the proportion of teachers who had the conflict resolution training in the sample seemed higher than that of the general teacher population in the system. While it is hard to determine at this point if the 10 schools which volunteered to participate in the survey were at a more advanced stage in their conflict resolution initiatives than other schools in general, or whether the teachers who responded to this survey were more likely to be those who had taken the training, it is for certain that the 134 teacher respondents in this study did represent half (51%) of the total teaching staff in the 10 participant schools.[4]

[3]Hereon, the term "peacemakers" will be used generically for students who were trained to be their school's "peacemakers", "problem-solvers", or "conflict managers".

[4] Four of the ten schools had half of their teachers participate in the survey, three other schools had about two-thirds or more of the teachers being represented, and the remaining three schools with at least a third of the teachers returning the questionnaire.

FINDINGS

The findings of this survey are presented under two major headings: (A) School Climate, and (b) Conflict Resolution Activities in School.

(A) School Climate

Student-teacher relationships

The majority of both students and teachers agreed that their relationships with each other were positive. For instance:

	Students			Teachers
	Always/ Often	Some-times	(Total)	Strongly/ Agree
- Teachers are nice to kids here	76%	17%	(93%)	98%
- Teachers are fair here	70%	20%	(90%)	99%
- Most teachers are respectful and polite to students	-	-	-	97%
- Teachers and students like to learn together	58%	28%	(86%)	96%
- Most kids and teachers solve their arguments peacefully in this school	55%	28%	(83%)	92%
- Teachers try hard to get kids to be nice	83%	11%	(94%)	-
- Most teachers make a real effort to get students to treat each other respectfully and kindly	-	-	-	98%
- Most teachers are good at keeping arguments between kids from turning into fights	73%	18%	(91%)	-
- If you have a problem with someone in this school, you can ask a teacher or some other adult from the school for help or advice	66%	18%	(84%)	-
- There is a lot of tesnion between teachers and some kids here	33%	34%	(67%)	19%

It should, however, be noted that about 1 in 5 teachers and 2 in 3 students did find a lot of tension between teachers and some students in schools.

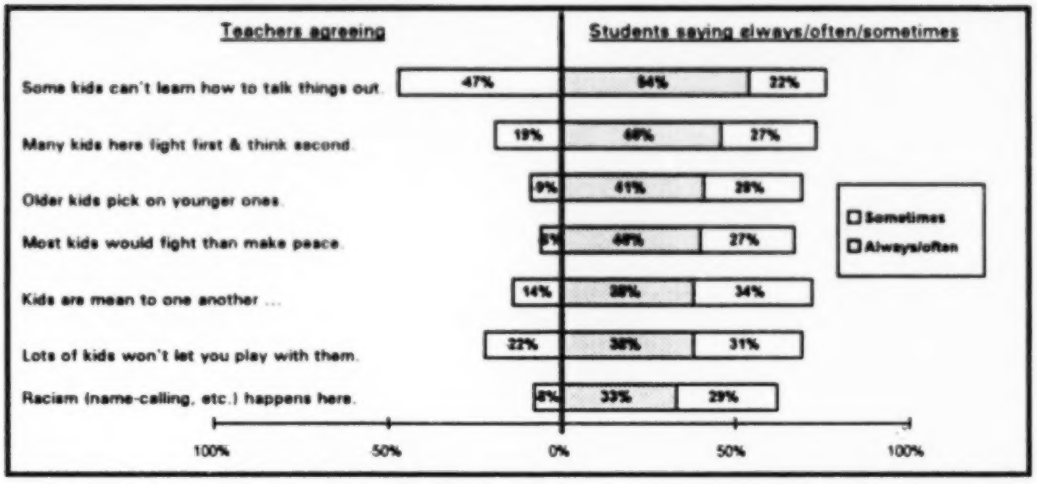
Students' social behaviours

A large majority of students and teachers also agreed with the positive statements about the general social behaviours of kids at school:

	Students			Teachers
	Always/ Often	Some-times	(Total)	Strongly/ Agree
- There is a feeling of cooperation in most classes	63%	27%	(89%)	-
- Students are respectful and polite to teachers	54%	32%	(86%)	94%
- Boys and girls treat each other nicely here	43%	39%	(82%)	86%
- Most students follow the school rules	45%	36%	(81%)	92%
- Kids are nice to one another	40%	46%	(85%)	94%

However, in statements regarding students' conflict-related behaviour (see Figure 1), there was a striking discrepancy between students and teachers in their responses. Teachers remained positive by disagreeing with most of the "negative" statements related to students' social conflict behaviours, whereas a majority of students indicated that these behaviours either occurred frequently or sometimes among their peers. For instance, while only 8% of the teachers agreed that racism happened in their school, about two thirds of the students indicated that racism did occur (33% always/often, 29% sometimes). The only "negative" item in which the students and the teachers seemed to have similar responses was "Some kids can't learn how to talk things out." Slightly over half (54%) of the students indicated that this always or often happened, and nearly half (47%) of the teachers agreed.

Figure 1: Teachers' vs. students' responses to items on student conflict-related behaviour



While students in general were more critical than their teachers of other kids' behaviour at school, a closer look shows that the male students were more likely than their female counterparts to find those conflict-related behaviours happened frequently (always/often) among students.[5] For instance:

	Boys		Girls
- Most kids watch a fight without going for help.....	67%	*	51%
- Some kids get picked on.....	59%	*	41%
- Most kids would rather fight than make peace.....	51%	*	33%
- Lots of kids won't let you play with them.....	44%	*	32%
- Kids are mean to one another and insult each other a lot....	44%	*	34%

(*The difference is statistically significant based on Chi-square analysis.)

[5]There were no significant differences between peacemakers and non-peacemakers in their perceptions of these conflict behaviours.

Students' conflict-solving skills

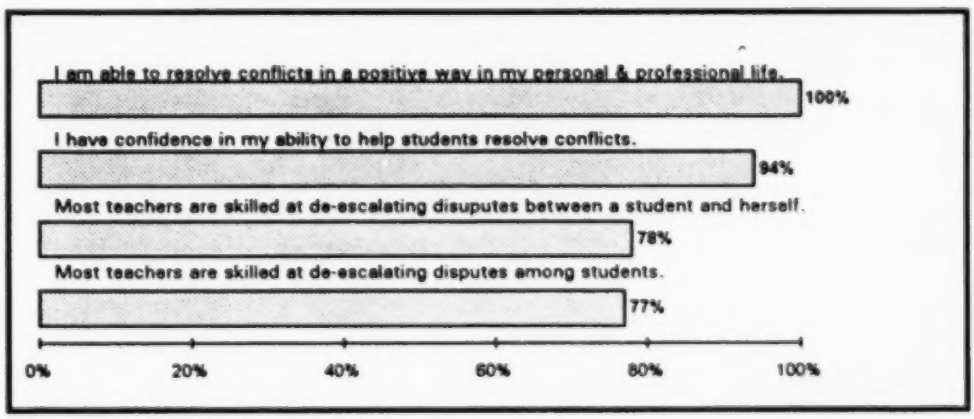
Nearly two thirds (62%) of the students claimed to be always or often good at solving arguments without fighting; it should be noted that girls (69%) were more likely to say so than boys (53%)[6]. Interestingly, when asked about *other* kids' conflict-solving abilities, only a third (34%) agreed that "*most kids* [always or often] know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight"; again boys had a lower percentage than girls (29% versus 38%) agreeing on this. In any event, almost all (95%) students saw the importance of teaching students solving arguments without fighting or name-calling.

As far as teachers' perception of student conflict-solving abilities was concerned, less than two-thirds (64%) of the teachers found most kids know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight - a proportion which was noticeably lower than their overwhelmingly positive responses to most other statements about students' behaviours. Indeed, *all* teacher respondents agreed with the importance of teaching students solving arguments peacefully.

Teachers' conflict-solving skills

All teachers found themselves capable of resolving conflicts positively in their personal and professional life, and as high as 94% of the teachers reported having confidence in their *own* ability to help students resolve conflicts. But when asked about the skills of teachers *other than themselves* in de-escalating disputes among or with students, a lower percentage, albeit a majority, (77-78%) found most other teachers skilled at it. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 2: Teachers' conflict resolution skills: Self vs. others


I am able to resolve conflicts in a positive way in my personal & professional life.
100%
I have confidence in my ability to help students resolve conflicts.
94%
Most teachers are skilled at de-escalating disuputes between a student and herself.
78%
Most teachers are skilled at de-escalating disputes among students.
77%
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%

[6] Again the gender differences in here were also statistically significant.

(B) Conflict Resolution Activities in School

Teachers' training

Three quarters of the teacher respondents had taken conflict resolution training, mainly the one offered by Toronto Board staff, and most (89% of those who had taken TBE training) were satisfied with it. Over half of these teachers still believed that if they themselves (51%) or other staff (64%) had more training in conflict resolution, their students or the school programs would benefit. For teachers who had not had the training, they were even more likely to think so.

	Teachers with some training	Teachers with no training
– Students would benefit if they themselves had more training.	51%	68%
– School programs would benefit if the staff had more training.	64%	81%

This implies that teachers generally valued such in-service training.

Teaching conflict resolution in class

While only a small proportion (18%) of the teacher respondents claimed to have taught conflict resolution strategies as a time-tabled part of their program, 90% reported to have intergrated conflict resolution strategies into their regular program. In fact, when asked about classroom practices and activities, both students and teachers indicated that teaching or fostering general principles about conflict resolution were common in class - for example: learning to talk respectfully to each other and to adults; learning to solve conflicts with words than with fighting; learning people of different backgrounds are equally important; and learning that put-downs about others' backgrounds are not tolerated in class. Most teachers further noted that these types of teaching and learning happened either on a daily or weekly basis. However, specific activities such as "Learning Circle" (formerly "Magic Circle"), role-playing, or writing about conflicts were infrequent in most classrooms. In fact, a significant proportion of both students and teachers reported that those practices had either rarely or never taken place in their classrooms.

	Students saying "no"	Teachers indicating rarely/never
– We have Learning Circle in our classrooms	61%	63%
– In our classroom, we write about conflicts	55%	41%
– We sometimes do role-plays of conflicts in our class and try to resolve the problems	46%	43%

Peer mediator program: Teachers' perspective

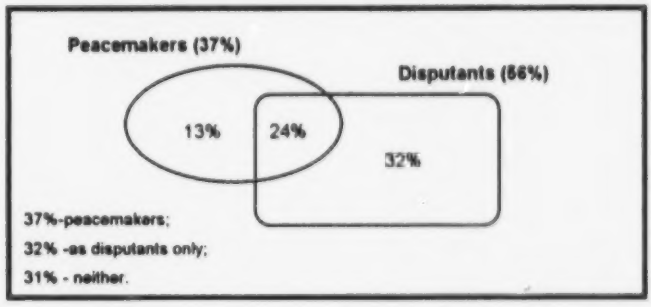
Although less than a third of the teacher respondents at the seven schools with the peer mediator program were directly involved in the program,[7] virtually all teachers in those schools were supportive of it. In fact, when asked about their perceptions of the program, an overwhelming majority of the teachers responded favourably. For example:

	Teachers agreed
– I think peacemakers ... help kids work out disagreements	95%
– The peer mediator program at our school is well-supervised	93%
– Our school is a better place because of the peer mediator program	91%
– Peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers do a good job	86%
– It is a good idea for kids to learn to be peacemakers	85%
– Peer mediators have sufficient training to do the job	76%

Peer mediator program: Students' perspective

Among the student respondents from the seven schools with the peer mediator program, over two thirds (69%) had been involved in the program either as peacemakers (37% of the student respondents) and/or as disputants (56% had been helped by peacemakers for the past year). (See Figure 3.)

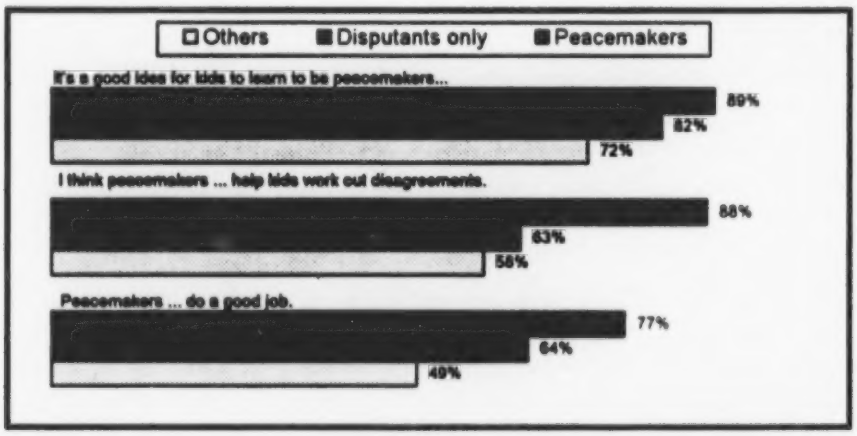
Figure 3: Proportions of student peacemakers and disputants



Unlike teachers who endorsed the program regardless of their level of involvement, students' degree of support varied according to the role they played in the program. While students in general were supportive of the program, it was those who had involved in the program, especially the peacemakers, who were more favourable to it. (See Figure 4.)

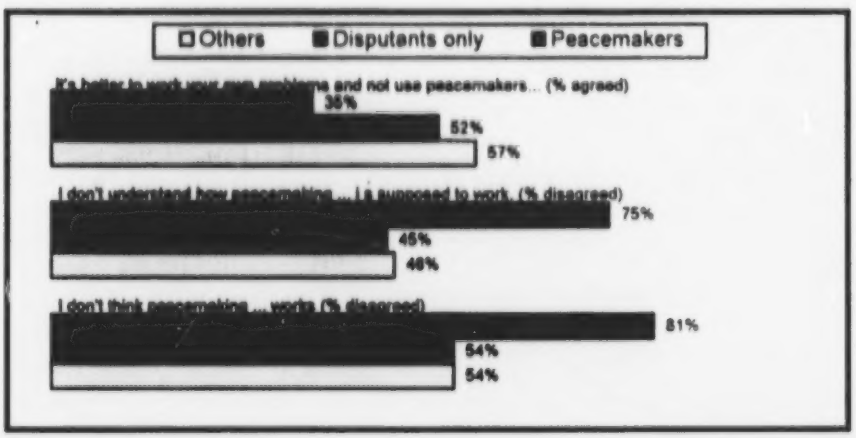
[7]Twenty-six percent took part in training peer mediators, and 24% in planning or running peer mediators meetings.

Figure 4: Students' perceptions of the peer mediator program: peacemakers vs. disputants and others



In fact, a further look at the students' response indicates that at this point, the program seemed more appealing to the peacemakers than to other students. (See Figure 5.) For instance, about half of the non-peacemakers (including the disputants) preferred to work out their problems without peacemakers, did not understand how the program worked, and did not think the program worked.

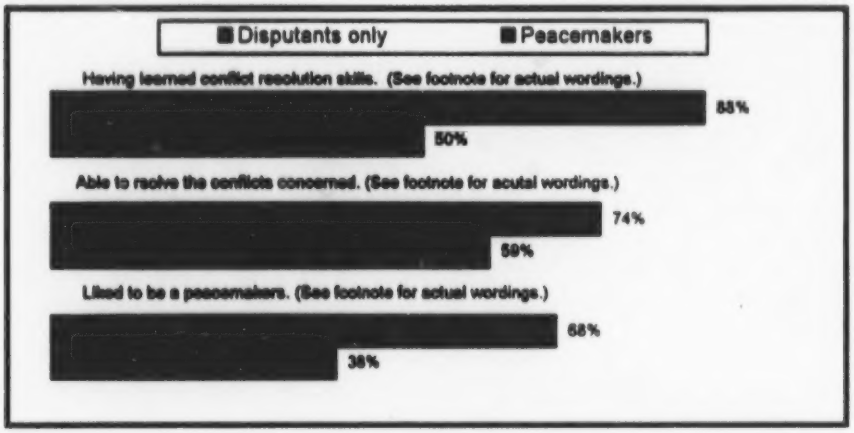
Figure 5: Critical assessments of the peer mediator program: peacemakers vs. disputants and others



Both the student disputants and the peacemakers were further asked about their experiences with the program. It was found that, at this stage, there was still a significant gap between the peacemakers and the disputants (not including those who were also peacemakers) in their satisfaction with and perceptions of the program. As shown in

Figure 6, peacemakers were much more likely than the disputants to report their positive experiences in terms of learning conflict resolution skills[8], being able to resolve conflicts concerned[9], and enjoying/ wanting to be a peacemaker[10].

Figure 6: Student conflict resolution skills: peacemakers vs. disputants



Peacemakers further noted the benefits they gained in their abilities to solve their own conflicts and problems, and to help others.

	Yes
– I have been able to help other kids by being a peacemaker, problem-solver or conflict manager	86%
– Peacemaking/problem-solving/conflict managing has helped me to solve my own problems better	80%
– I have been able to help others even when I'm not on peacemaker/ problem-solver/conflict manager duty, because of what I've learned	70%
– I have helped my school be a better place	64%

In fact, a breakdown of students' response to the question on their personal conflict-solving skills further reveals that the peacemakers (69%) were more likely than the disputants (58%) or other students (59%) to consider themselves being always/often "good at solving arguments without fighting".

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[8]For the disputants, "I've learned how to solve arguments by watching and listening to the peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers." For the peacemakers, "I have learned different ways of solving problems since I became a peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manager."

[9]For the disputants, "Peacemaking/problem-solving/conflict managing has helped solve conflicts I've been in." For the peacemakers, "I have been able to help resolve most conflicts when I've tried.'

[10]For the disputants, "I would like to be a peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manager." For the peacemakers, "I would like to be a peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manager."

Finally, it should be noted that despite their favourable support for the program, and the benefits they gained from it, over half of the peacemakers did express some reservations about the effectiveness of the program on other students, as indicated by their following responses.

	Peacemakers (agreed)	Disputants (agreed)
– When peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers try to help solve a conflict, it doesn't stay fixed; the same kids may start fighting again pretty soon	58%	64%
– A lot of kids won't pay any attention to the peacemakers/problem-solvers/ conflict managers	53%	-

CONCLUSION

While this survey only provides a cross-sectional look at the overall school climate and conflict resolution initiatives in ten elementary schools, a number of interesting findings and research issues did emerge. On one hand, both students and teachers were more or less equally positive in their perceptions of themselves, of teacher-student relationships, of the school environment in general, of their schools' peer mediator programs, of the importance of teaching students resolve conflicts peacefully, and of the value of staff training in conflict resolution (teachers' responses only). On the other hand, there were significant perceptual differences between teachers and students, between boys and girls, and between student peacemakers and other students over a number of issues.

Between students and teachers. Most teachers did *not* think social conflict behaviours - such as fighting instead of making peace, being mean to one another, picking on younger ones, rejecting other kids, name calling, etc. - prevalent among their students. However, the majority of students, especially boys, found these behaviours quite common among their peers. While it is encouraging to find teachers holding positive views of their students' behaviours, one should not overlook the gap between what they perceived and what the students themselves acknowledged. Perhaps teachers may need to be sensitized about the general existence of these behaviours among students, so that appropriate attention and actions can be given in this area.

Between boys and girls. Another interesting finding captured in this survey is the significant difference between boys and girls in their conflict-related behaviour and their conflict resolution skills. Boys were more likely than girls to indicate the frequent

occurrences of social conflict behaviour among their peers. On the other hand, girls were more likely than boys to admit that they were always/often good at solving arguments without fighting. While this finding may not be a surprise, it underscores the need for related school and support staff to pay attention to and to address the implications of these gender differences in students' social conflict behaviour and attitude.

Between peacemakers and other students. It is also clear from the survey that student peacemakers were very supportive of their school's peer mediator program, and had benefitted from it in terms of building their confidence in personal conflict resolution skills, and in helping other students. However, the benefits gained by these peacemakers and their favourable perceptions of the program did not seem to have yet transferred - at least not to the same degree - to other students, including the disputants who had been helped by the peacemakers. This is an important message for conflict resolution staff in that more efforts are needed to ensure the kinds of gains received by the peacemakers are also effectively fostered among other students. After all, the ultimate goal of any conflict resolution programs is that all students have the skills to resolve their conflicts effectively.

As a result of the survey, a number of research issues also arise. First, as mentioned earlier, there is a need for a further investigation into the discrepancy between teachers' and students' perception of student conflict-related behaviours. For instance, would it be possible that the teacher respondents in this survey, most of whom had taken conflict resolution training, tended to hold a more positive view of their students' social behaviours than other teachers who had not had the training? Or did the discrepancy simply have to do with the different perspective of teachers (adults) versus that of students (children)? Or whether students' social conflict behaviours were more conspicuous to the students themselves than to the teachers from outside?

Another research issue relates to teaching conflict resolution in class. While both students and teachers agreed that fostering general principals about tolerance and conflict resolution had been integrated into classroom learning, it is interesting to know more specifically what and how this had taken place in class. It has, however, been also noted in the survey that specific in-class conflict resolution activities - such as Learning Circle or role playing - were rarely or never practised. There is a need to understand the reasons behind the infrequent use of these strategies by examining, for example, their practicality or applicability in class. Moreover, it may be of interest to see how both the general and

specific in-class practises and activities would have affected students' social attitude and conflict resolution skills.

Further understanding of the above research issues requires an in-depth look into the situation through perhaps school observations and focus group interviews with students and staff concerned, including parent facilitators if applicable. Such qualitative research will provide insights into the needs of teachers and students, upon which future action plans can be based. Finally, a replication of the survey with the same participant schools, and additional schools if possible, is suggested in order to examine the long-term progress and development of the individual schools' conflict resolution initiatives, and to determine the impact of these initiatives on students' social attitude and their skills in handling conflicts peacefully and effectively.

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APPENDIX A

Student Questionnaire

School_____

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE ON SCHOOL CLIMATE AND PROBLEM-SOLVING

Please answer the questions below, to help teachers and others know how things are for you at your school.

PART I. SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT YOU

1. Are you a boy or a girl? Boy Girl (Circle one.)

2. What grade are you in? 4 5 6 7 8 (Circle one.)

PART II. ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

Tell us how often these things happen at your school. Put a circle around one answer for each.

3.	I like coming to school.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
4.	Kids are nice to one another.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
5.	Teachers are fair here.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
6.	Teachers are nice to kids here.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
7.	Teachers and students like to learn together.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
8.	Students are respectful and polite to teachers.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never

9.	Boys and girls treat each other nicely here.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
10.	Racism (name-calling, etc.) happens here.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
11.	Many kids at this school fight first and think second.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
12.	There is a lot of tension between teachers and some kids here.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
13.	If you have a problem with someone in this school, you can ask a teacher or some other adult from the school for help or advice.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
14.	There is a feeling of cooperation in most classes.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
15.	The school rules are clear and fair.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
16.	Most students follow the school rules.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
17.	It is very important to teach kids in school about how to solve arguments without fighting or name-calling.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
18.	Most kids here know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never

19.	Most teachers are good at keeping arguments between kids from turning into fights.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
20.	Most kids and teachers solve their arguments peacefully in this school.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
21.	I am good at solving arguments without fighting.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
22.	Kids are mean to one another and insult each other a lot.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
23.	Most kids watch a fight without going for help.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
24.	Older kids pick on younger ones.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
25.	Lots of kids won't let you play with them.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
26.	Some kids get picked on.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
27.	I think it's fun to give kids trouble.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never
28.	Teachers try hard to get kids to be nice.	Always	Often	Sometimes	Once in a while	Never

PART III. ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Please answer these questions by putting a circle around "yes" or "no" or "I'm not sure".

29. Our teacher helps us to learn how to listen to each other.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
30. In our classroom we talk about conflicts people have and how they could resolve them.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
31. We sometimes do role-plays of conflicts in our class and try to resolve the problems.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
32. We read stories where the characters have conflicts with each other.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
33. Teachers help us to learn to solve conflicts with words rather than fighting.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
34. In our classroom, we write stories about conflicts.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
35. We have Learning Circle/Magic Circle in our classrooms.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
36. We learn that people of different races, religions and countries are equally important.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
37. We learn that boys and girls are equally important.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
38. We learn that put-downs about race, religion, language or gender aren't tolerated in our classroom.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
39. We talk about feelings in our class.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
40. We usually feel good about ourselves in this classroom.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
41. We do not allow "put-downs" in this class.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
42. We learn to talk respectfully to each other and to adults here.	Yes	No	I'm not sure

PART IV. ABOUT PEACEMAKER/PROBLEM-SOLVER/CONFLICT MANAGER PROGRAMS

43. Is there a peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manger program in your school? (Circle one.)	Yes	No	I'm not sure

Please circle one: "Agree", "Disagree", or "I'm not sure", after each sentence below.

44. I think peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers help kids work out disagreements.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
45. Peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers do a good job.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
46. It is a good idea for kids to learn to be peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
47. It's better to work out your own problems and not use peacemakers/problem-solvers/ conflict managers.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
48. Most kids would rather fight than make peace.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
49. Some kids fight because they don't know how to talk things out.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
50. Some kids can't learn how to talk things out.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
51. I don't understand how peacemaking, problem-solving or conflict managing is supposed to work.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure

PART V. ABOUT GETTING HELP FROM OTHERS

52. Have you ever had a peacemaker/problem-solver/manager try to help you solve conflict? Yes No

If you answered "Yes", please finish this page. If you answered "No" go to question 63.

53. How many times have the peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers tried to help you solve a conflict within the past year? (Circle one only.)

a) Never
b) 1 or 2 times
c) 3, 4, or 5 times
d) more than 5 times.

After each statement below, circle "Agree" or "Disagree" or "I'm not sure" to tell how you feel.

54. Peacemaking/problem-solving/conflict managing has helped solve conflicts I've been in.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
55. Most kids would learn a lot from being trained as a peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manager	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
56. The peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers do a good job at this school.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
57. I'd rather work things out for myself than get help from the peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
58. I don't think peacemaking/problem-solving/conflict managing works.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
59. I would like to be a peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manager.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
60. I've learned how to solve arguments by watching and listening to the peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
61. I don't understand what peacemaking, problem-solving, or conflict managing is about.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure
62. When peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers try to help solve a conflict, it doesn't stay fixed; the same kids may start fighting again pretty soon.	Agree	Disagree	I'm not sure

PART VI. ABOUT BEING A PEACEMAKER/PROBLEM-SOLVER/CONFLICT MANAGER

63. Are you a peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manager at your school? Yes No

If the answer is "Yes", please respond to the statements below. **If the answer is "No", please stop and give your questionnaire to your teacher.**

64. How long have you been a peacemaker or problem-solver or conflict manager? (Circle one only.)

a) I started this year
b) I started last year and I'm still doing it
c) I did it last year but I am not doing it anymore
d) I did it at another school for one year or more

65. How many conflicts have you tried to help resolve within the past month? (Circle one only.)

a) Never
b) 1 or 2 times
c) 3, 4, or 5 times
d) more than 5 times.

After each statement below, circle "Yes", "No" or "I'm not sure".

66. I have learned different ways of solving problems since I became a peacemaker/problem-solver/ conflict manager.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
67. I like being a peacemaker (or problem-solver or conflict manager).	Yes	No	I'm not sure
68. I have been able to help other kids by being a peacemaker, problem-solver or conflict manager.	Yes	No	I'm not sure

69. I have been able to help others even when I'm not on peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manager duty, because of what I've learned.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
70. I have helped my school be a better place.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
71. Peacemaking/problem-solving/conflict managing has helped me to solve my own problems better.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
72. Being a peacemaker/problem-solver/conflict manager is hard.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
73. A lot of kids won't pay any attention to the peacemakers/problem-solvers/conflict managers.	Yes	No	I'm not sure
74. I have been able to help resolve most conflicts when I've tried.	Yes	No	I'm not sure

Thank you very much for your work. Please give this questionnaire to your teacher.

APPENDIX B

Teacher Questionnaire

School_____

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAMS: ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle one answer for each question.

I. SCHOOL PROGRAM AND TEACHER INVOLVEMENT

1. Gender:

   Female 1
   Male 2

2. Grade(s): _____ Position:_____

3. Do you teach conflict resolution strategies as a time-tabled part of your program?

   Yes 1
   No 2

4. Do you integrate conflict resolution strategies into your program (but without time-tabling for it)?

   Yes 1
   No 2

5. Do you feel your students would benefit if <u>you</u> had more training in conflict resolution?

   Yes 1
   No 2 Explain: _____
   Not sure 3 Explain: _____

6. Do you feel your school programs would benefit if <u>the staff</u> had more training in conflict resolution?

   Yes 1
   No 2 Explain: _____
   Not sure 3 Explain: _____

7. Does your school have a conflict resolution program?

Yes	1	
No	2	(IF NO, GO TO QUESTION 12.)
I'm not sure	3	

8. Are you supportive of this conflict resolution program?

Yes	1
No	2

9. Does your school have a schoolyard peer mediator* program?

Yes	1	
No	2	(IF NO, GO TO QUESTION 12.)

10. Have you been involved in training the peer mediators?*

Yes	1
No	2

11. Have you planned and/or helped run the peer mediators meetings?

Yes	1
No	2

12. Have you taken <u>any</u> conflict resolution training?

Yes	1	
No	2	(IF NO, GO TO QUESTION 18.)

13. About how many days training have you had?

one day or less	1
two days	2
more than two days	3

14. Was training delivered by Toronto Board of Education (TBE) staff:

Yes	1	
No	2	(IF NO OR UNSURE, GO TO QUESTION 16.)
Unsure	3	

* (Several terms are used for schoolyard peer-mediator programs: peacemakers, problem-solving, conflict managers, etc. For the purpose of this survey, the term peer mediators is used.)

15. If yes, how satisfactory was the training offered by TBE staff?

highly satisfactory	1
satisfactory	2
unsatisfactory	3

16. Was training delivered by people who are <u>not</u> TBE staff?

Yes	1	
No	2	(IF NO OR UNSURE, GO TO QUESTION 18.)
Unsure	3	

17. If yes, how satisfactory was the training delivered by non-TBE staff?

highly satisfactory	1
satisfactory	2
unsatisfactory	3

II. SCHOOL CLIMATE

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with these statements by circling one number for each.

		Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Not sure/ I don't know
18.	Most children like coming to this school.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Most staff members here work as a team.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Most children here are nice to one another.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Most teachers treat the students fairly.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Most teachers are nice to the students.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Most teachers and students like to learn together.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Most students are respectful and polite to teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Most teachers are respectful and polite to students.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Most boys and girls treat each other nicely.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	Racism (e.g. name-calling) happens here frequently.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Many students at this school fight first and think second.	1	2	3	4	5

		Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Not sure/ I don't know
29.	There is a lot of tension between teachers and some kids here.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Students often ask me for help or advice.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	The school rules are clear and fair.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	Most students follow the rules.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	It is very important to teach students how to solve arguments without fighting or name-calling.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	Most students know how to keep an argument from turning into a fight.	1	2	3	4	5
35.	Most teachers are skilled at de-escalating disputes between and among students.	1	2	3	4	5
36.	Most teachers are skilled at de-escalating disputes between a student and her/himself.	1	2	3	4	5
37.	Most staff and students solve their conflicts peacefully.	1	2	3	4	5
38.	I am able to resolve conflicts in a positive way in my personal and professional life.	1	2	3	4	5
39.	I have confidence in my ability to help students resolve conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
40.	Children here are often mean and insulting to one another.	1	2	3	4	5
41.	Older children pick on younger ones a lot.	1	2.	3	4	5
42.	Many children try to exclude others from their play.	1	2	3	4	5
43.	Most teachers make a real effort to get students to treat each other respectfully and kindly.	1	2	3	4	5

III. CLASSROOM PRACTICES AND ACTIVITIES

Please indicate how often each of these things happens by circling one number for each statement.

		Almost every day	At least weekly	At least biweekly	At least monthly	Rarely or never
44.	In the classroom, we talk about conflicts people have and how they could resolve them.	1	2	3	4	5
45.	We role-play conflict situations and how to resolve them.	1	2	3	4	5
46.	In the curriculum, I deliberately include stories and books in which the characters have inter-personal conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
47.	I help my students learn to solve conflicts with words rather than fighting.	1	2	3	4	5
48.	In our classroom, the students write stories about conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
49.	We have Learning Circle/Magic Circle in our classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
50.	In our classroom, the students learn that people of different races, religions, and countries are equally important.	1	2	3	4	5
51.	I teach my students that put-downs about race, religion, language or gender aren't tolerated in our classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
52.	I include discussions about feelings and help children learn to articulate their feelings.	1	2	3	4	5
53.	I include activities to enhance students' self-esteem in the classroom curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
54.	I teach my students to speak respectfully to each other as well as to adults.	1	2	3	4	5
55.	We have class meetings to discuss friendship and inter-personal behaviour.	1	2	3	4	5

IV. PEER MEDIATOR PROGRAMS

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

		Agree Strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	Not sure/ I don't know
56.	Peer mediator programs do help children work out disagreements.	1	2	3	4	5
57.	The peer mediators do a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
58.	Most children would rather fight than make peace.	1	2	3	4	5
59.	Some children seem to be unable to learn how to talk things out.	1	2	3	4	5
60.	Peer mediator programs are not very effective.	1	2	3	4	5
61.	The peer mediator program at our school is well-supervised.	1	2	3	4	5
62.	Peer mediators have sufficient training to do the job.	1	2	3	4	5
63.	Children who become mediators learn how to better resolve their own conflicts.	1	2	3	4	5
64.	I don't understand how the peer mediator process is supposed to work.	1	2	3	4	5
65.	Our school is a better place because of the peer mediator program.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C

Information Sheet for Program Facilitator

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAMS:
Information Sheet for Program Facilitator

School: _____ Date: _____

Program facilitator/Principal/Vice-principal: _____

1. Name of your school's conflict resolution program: _____

2. When was the program first implemented? _____ (month) 19___

3. Which and how many staff members were involved last year? (Give approximate numbers.)

   ___ Classroom teachers
   ___ Principal / vice-principal(s)
   ___ Office staff
   ___ Others (specify: _____)

4. How many staff members are involved currently? (If the answer is different from Question 3.)

   ___ Classroom teachers
   ___ Principal / vice-principal(s)
   ___ Office staff
   ___ Others (specify: _____)

5. What are the main features of this program? (e.g. involvement of student mediators or peacemakers; staff in-service; classroom activities; use of drama; etc.)

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. How satisfied are you with the program?

   _____
   _____

7. Does your school plan to: ( ) modify, ( ) expand, ( ) maintain, or ( ) cancel the program? (Please check one, and explain why.)

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

Thank you for your co-operation.